



SUMMER READING LIST*

Dream Big! READ ~ Grades 5 & 6

compiled for the Connecticut Department of Education by Linda Williams
Connecticut State Library

FICTION

Keeper by Kathi Appelt

On the night of the blue moon when mermaids are said to gather on a sandbar in the Gulf of Mexico, ten-year-old Keeper sets out in a small boat, with her dog BD and a seagull named Captain, determined to find her mother, a mermaid, as Keeper has always believed, who left long ago to return to the sea.

NCTE

A Tale Dark & Grimm by Adam

Gidwitz

Follows Hansel and Gretel as they walk out of their own story and into eight more tales, encountering such wicked creatures as witches, along with kindly strangers and other helpful folk. Based in part on the Grimms' fairy tales Faithful Johannes, Hansel and Gretel, The seven ravens, Brother and sister, The robber bridegroom, and The devil and his three golden hairs.

ALA, Nutmeg Nominee 2013

A Wrinkle in Time by Madeleine

L'Engle

Meg Murry and her friends become involved with un-earthly strangers and a search for Meg's father, who has disappeared while engaged in secret work for the government.

ALA, 50th Anniversary

Dave at Night by Gail Carson Levine

When orphaned Dave is sent to the Hebrew Home for Boys where he is treated cruelly, he sneaks out at night and is welcomed into the music- and culture-filled world of the Harlem Renaissance.

ALA

Where the Mountain Meets the

Moon by Grace Lin

Minli, an adventurous girl from a poor village, buys a magical goldfish, and then joins a dragon who cannot fly on a quest to find the Old Man of the Moon in hopes of bringing life to Fruitless Mountain and freshness to Jade River.

ALA, IRA, NCSS, Nutmeg Nominee

Gossamer by Lois Lowry

While learning to bestow dreams, a young dream giver tries to save an eight-year-old boy from the effects of

both his abusive past and the nightmares inflicted on him by the frightening Sinisteeds.

ALA

The Night Tourist by Katherine Marsh

Fourteen-year-old Jack Perdu, a prodigy of classical mythology, suffers a near-fatal accident after which he meets Euri, a young ghost who introduces him to New York's ghostly underworld, eight levels below Grand Central Station, where Jack decides to look for his mother who disappeared years earlier. (BWI)

Edgar Award (Mystery Writers of America)

The Same Stuff as Stars by Katherine

Paterson

When Angel's self-absorbed mother leaves her and her younger brother with their poor great-grandmother, the eleven-year-old girl worries not only about her mother and brother, her imprisoned father, the frail old woman, but also about a mysterious man who begins sharing with her the wonder of the stars.

IRA

Jimmy's Stars by Mary Ann Rodman

In 1943, eleven-year-old Ellie is her brother Jimmy's "best girl," and when he leaves Pittsburgh just before Thanksgiving to fight in World War II, he promises he will return, asks her to leave the Christmas tree up until he does, and reminds her to "let the joy out."

IRA

The Dreamer by Pam Munoz Ryan

A fictionalized biography of the Nobel Prize-winning Chilean poet Pablo Neruda, who grew up a painfully shy child, ridiculed by his overbearing father, but who became one of the most widely-read poets in the world.

ALA, IRA, NCSS

Night of the Howling Dogs by Graham

Salisbury

In 1975, eleven Boy Scouts, their leaders, and some new friends camping at Halape, Hawaii, find their survival skills put to the test when a massive earthquake strikes, followed by a tsunami.

NCSS, Nutmeg Nominee 2011

Wonderstruck by Brian Selznick

Having lost his mother and his hearing in a short time, twelve-year-old Ben leaves his Minnesota home in 1977 to seek the father he never knew in New York City, and meets there Rose, who is also longing for something missing from her life. Ben's story is told in words; Rose's in pictures.

ALA

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Keeping the Night Watch by Hope Anita Smith

A thirteen-year-old African American boy chronicles what happens to his family when his father, who temporarily left, returns home and they all must deal with their feelings of anger, hope, abandonment, and fear.

[ALA](#)

Moon Over Manifest by Clare Vanderpool

Twelve-year-old Abilene Tucker is the daughter of a drifter who, in the summer of 1936, sends her to stay with an old friend in Manifest, Kansas, where he grew up, and where she hopes to find out some things about his past.

[ALA](#)

GRAPHIC NOVEL

Robot Dreams by Sara Varon

The enduring friendship between a dog and a robot is portrayed in this wordless graphic novel.

[ALA](#), [NCTE](#)

NONFICTION

How They Croaked by Georgia Bragg

Shares the sometimes gruesome details of the deaths of nineteen famous historical figures, including King Tut, Pocahontas, George Washington, Edgar Allan Poe, and Marie Curie.

[ALA](#)

All Stations! Distress! by Don Brown

Presents an illustrated account of the Titanic's deadly voyage on April 12, 1912, when two thousand passengers, rich and poor alike, fought to survive the tragedy while partially filled lifeboats launched into the night with seven hundred people as some family members stayed behind.

[ALA](#)

Arctic Lights, Arctic Nights by

Debbie S. Miller

Describes the unique light phenomena of the Alaskan Arctic and the way animals adapt to the temperature and daylight. Changes each month of the year.

[NSTA](#)

Saving the Ghost of the Mountain by Sy Montgomery

A pale, spotted, almost cloud-like coat makes the snow leopard un-

cannily invisible in its rocky mountain habitat. Author Sy Montgomery and photographer Nic Bishop accompany conservationist Tom McCarthy and his team as they travel to Mongolia's Altai Mountains to gather data about snow leopard populations in an attempt to save this endangered species.

[NSTA](#)

The Tarantula Scientist by Sy Montgomery

Describes the research that Samuel Marshall and his students are doing on tarantulas, including the largest spider on earth, the Goliath bird eating tarantula.

[ALA](#), [NSTA](#)

Afghan Dreams by Tony O'Brien

Presents stories of young people in Afghanistan, including street workers, students, and pickpockets, who long for peace in their neighborhoods.

[ALA](#), [NCSS](#)

All About Sleep From A to Zzzz by

Elaine Scott

Describes some of the very interesting things that occur while people are sleeping, explains the science behind sleep walking, dreams, and other aspects of sleep, and explores some of the remaining mysteries.

[NSTA](#)

River of Dreams by Hudson Talbott

A heavily illustrated introduction to the Hudson River's strategic, economic, and cultural significance.

[ALA](#), [NCSS](#)

Life on Earth-- And Beyond by Pamela S. Turner

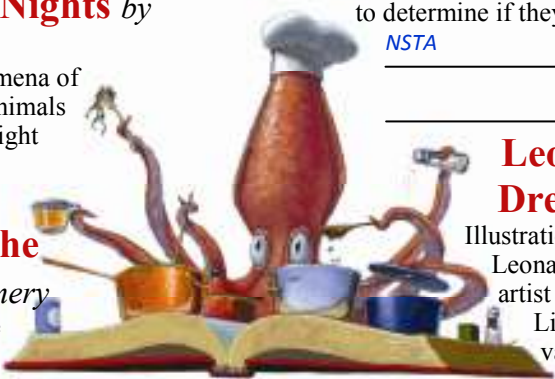
Examines astrobiologist Dr. Chris McKay's efforts to prove that life does exist beyond Earth, with behind-the-scenes photographs capturing McKay and his research team at work studying microbes that live beyond all odds and trying to determine if they can thrive in space.

[NSTA](#)

BIOGRAPHY

Leonardo, Beautiful Dreamer by Robert Byrd

Illustrations and text portray the life of Leonardo da Vinci, who gained fame as an artist through such works as the Mona Lisa, and as a scientist by studying various subjects including human anatomy and flight. [NCSS](#)



*Most books listed were selected as exemplary books by one or more of the following organizations: the American Library Association (ALA), the International Reading Association (IRA), the National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS), the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), the National Science Teachers Association (NSTA) or the United States Board on Books for Young People (USBYP).